

The Real Life of your Selfie

Facial recognition is not about your face. Facial recognition is about how your digital identity can be used to determine your rights.

What happens when your selfie becomes the digital you?

Your selfie is your data with every selfie you take and upload you create a set of data about your facial features. This can be turned into a face print a set of nodule points form characteristic which can be used to identify only you, such as a 3D model of your face that includes other measurements like the shape of your eye sockets, the curves of your nose or chin.

Is your face print really you?

Facial recognition can make your life more efficient by allowing your face to open doors, pay for services, get timely information, access better treatments, unlock your phone, or pay for something with your smile. At the same time your face data is valuable to different agencies, such as law enforcement, border control, health authorities, or companies like those in the advertising industry or who run public spaces such as malls, football stadiums, and airports.

Who wants your face?

Facial recognition has two main purposes: identification and verification. Identification, that answers the question "who is this person?" You can be identified in a crowd of other faces in real time through photography, CCTV cameras, or other image taking devices. Verification, that answers the question "is this person who they say they are?" Verification compares your face to other photographs or biometric data of you to confirm your unique identity.

Your Body, Your Data

Facial recognition systems can be even more effective at identifying you when they're combined with other methods: fingerprints and DNA samples, gait recognition, voice recognition, even emotional recognition. Scanning your face can also extract other information like skin biometrics, iris and retina fingerprinting, and even ear shapes.

Are you always in control of your face print?

Face prints can be made from your selfies but they can also be created from any photograph or video footage taken of you even when you don't realise it. The same face print that makes your life easier and more fun can be used to improve ways of monitoring your behaviour. Like where you go, what you're doing when, and with whom. What if it can determine other characteristics about you, like what you think, your mood, your IQ, or even your political orientation. That information can then be used to decline or enable services, reassign privileges, serve you different information or offer different prices, even give you access to different places or not.

When this happens, would you still feel comfortable having your face print accessible to anyone?